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SUBJECT: MEPI 4TH QUARTER UPDATE FOR MOROCCO

REF: A) 07 Rabat 1724

¶1. Summary: This cable highlights the MEPI programs and initiatives undertaken in Morocco from July 1 - September 30. During the quarter the Women in Technology (WIT) program was launched. Highlights from existing programs included activities by the Advancing Learning and Employability for a Better Future (ALEF), MEPI Alumni Network and the American Bar Association (ABA). Implementers are partnering with local NGOs at the grassroots level to support numerous programs committed to reform in the four MEPI pillars. End Summary.

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LAUNCH OF THE WIT PROGRAM  
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¶2. Minister of Social Development, Family and Solidarity Nouzka Skalli officially launched the WIT Morocco program in Rabat on July 9, 2008. Also attending the event were representatives from the U.S. Embassy, Microsoft Morocco, several members of the media and Moroccan NGOs. The WIT program in Morocco established partnerships with local actors of development that will assist in implementing the program in three main regions: Oriental (Oujda-Jerrada), Center (Azrou-Ein Leuh- Timahdit) and South (Marrakech Tensift El Haouz). WIT was designed by The Institute of International Education (IIE) West Coast Center to build the capacity of organizations serving women in Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. In Morocco, the WIT program is hosted by Tanmia, a Moroccan NGO based in Rabat.

¶3. During the month of July, WIT Morocco organized Trainings of Trainers on Microsoft's Unlimited Potential Curriculum (UP), Professional Development (PD) and Business Planning for Sustainability (BPS). Trainers were introduced to the various methods of operating their centers and taught how to use their resources on a cost recovery model. The WIT trainings contain two fields: The Information Technology and Communication (ICT) training (based on the Microsoft Unlimited Potential program) includes an introduction to computers, file and document management, word processing, as well as training on Excel, Access and PowerPoint. The second area provides training on professional development, through various modules including teamwork, conflict resolution, communication, inclusion to the job market, and leadership.

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ALEF ACTIVITIES  
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¶4. The 4th quarter marked the transition from closure of the original ALEF literacy program and initiating activities under the MEPI awarded follow-on grant in July 2008. ALEF is soon expected to submit their final report for the previous grant. The report is currently in the final editing stage after ALEF determined it was necessary to conduct field evaluations to clarify questions on

previous results in one province. Some of the highlights of the final report include findings that the innovative Passerelle approach integrating pre-literacy program in local languages, Darija and Amazighe, resulted in increased levels of learning, reduced dropout rates, improved individual empowerment and greater cost effectiveness. The latter is due to the attainment of an equal (or higher) level of learning with fewer class hours.

15. The major activities of the quarter following the signing of the new MEPI grant agreement included the development of the final work plan and the agreement on and initiation of key planning activities for the upcoming year with the National Office for Literacy (DLCA). Specific activities included: development of overall strategic plan for 2008-09; completion and approval of annual work plan with DLCA and MEPI; selection of six regions (two new ones) to participate in program activities for 2008-2009, in collaboration with DLCA; printing (by DLCA, at their expense) of 5000 copies of trainer's guide; meetings with DLCA staff to prepare for the start-up of the new literacy cycle in November 2008 and for the first training of trainers workshops scheduled for October 2008; coordination and planning workshop conducted with regional provincial representatives of DLCA; support to regional and provincial DLCA staff in the development of the action plans for the integration of the Paserelles (Pre-literacy programs) into their literacy programs and training of trainers activities. Another noteworthy event was the participation of an ALEF associate from the DLCA in an international literacy conference in Nepal at which she presented the ALEF-supported Passerelles model and results.

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MEPI ALUMNI NETWORK ACTIVITIES

RABAT 00001025 002 OF 002

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16. During the month of July, a group of MEPI Alumni took part in a creative initiative that brought tangible change to Rhamna in southern Morocco - one of the country's least developed areas. Through the efforts of a coalition of MEPI partner organizations including Association Femmes Artisannes, Tanmia, and Association Marocaine d'Appui ` la Promotion de la Petite Entreprise (AMAPPE), as well as ambitious individuals from the MEPI Alumni community and various sponsors, the Caravan for Women Economic Empowerment project was created. The project assisted Rhamna's local population in developing new sources of income and economic opportunities.

17. A group of Rhamna Women along with a number of MEPI Alumni volunteers participated in an exchange visit to the north of Morocco. They visited successful women cooperatives and associations as well as fair trade boutiques. There was an amazing exchange of knowledge and information between the northern and southern women. The Rhamna women were amazed at how these women turned a simple skill into a real source of income. After returning back to the region and receiving cooperatives, marketing, and communication skills training from a field expert, two women were selected to represent the caravan at the national exhibition of social economy in Kenitra. These women brought their products as well as their colleagues' and met important actors that were interested in helping them to further develop their cooperatives.

18. On July 19th, more than 150 people representing local civil society, government, and business leaders attended a Rhamna Women led conference in Benguerir. For the first time, members of the Rhamna Womens group stood in front of a crowd and shared how this caravan opened doors and enabled them to become women leaders ready to make a change in their community. At the end of the conference, the Rhamna women were given awards certificates as an appreciation of their efforts.

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ABA ACTIVITIES

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19. In July, Judge Thomas Wallitsch conducted a workshop for Moroccan judge-trainers of the Institute Supérieure de la Magistrature (ISM).

This is the judicial training institute for Morocco aimed at defining the relevant ethics curriculum and identifying topics that will be subjects of comprehensive legal case studies. The curriculum developed in this workshop formed the basis for a following two-day training session held on September 25-26 led by Judge Karen Klein and conducted for trainers of the ISM. The Board of Directors of the national judges association ("Hassania") held a final planning meeting on September 26 to prepare for the national conference at which the Charter of Judicial Ethics will be adopted. The national conference is scheduled to take place on October 24. The ABA assisted the Hassania in the creation of a web site that includes information concerning the Hassania, its structure, statute, and regional offices. The ABA also assisted the Hassania in the creation of an informational brochure and newsletter concerning the Hassania's activities that is intended to improve its image and internal communication.

¶10. A detailed description of MEPI programs in Morocco can be found on the Mission unclassified Internet web page at [www.usembassy.ma](http://www.usembassy.ma).

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